



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: February 5, 2015

PROJECT**Tour Bridge Modernization Project**

Bureau of Engraving and Printing
310 14th Street, SW
Washington, DC

NCPC FILE NUMBER

7004

NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER

1.74(64.20)44069

SUBMITTED BY

United States Department of Treasury

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Preliminary approval of site and
building plans

REVIEW AUTHORITY

--Federal Project in the District

PROPOSED ACTION

Approve with comments

ACTION ITEM TYPE

Staff Presentation

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Department of the Treasury has submitted for preliminary review the Tour Bridge modernization project, including new interior lobby, security processing, and exterior public spaces at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) Main Building. The BEP Main Building is located adjacent to the National Mall, just south of Independence Avenue SW, between 14th and 15th Streets SW. The scope of the project will entail the rehabilitation of the steel truss entrance bridge that is part of the original historic fabric of BEP's Main Building. The existing metal panel walls and single-pane windows that enclose the bridge will be removed and replaced with a full height glazed curtain wall system that will showcase the historic structure, increase natural light to the interior, and enhance the exhibit space. The project will improve pedestrian circulation and the overall streetscape while restoring the original curvilinear plaza along 14th Street. The project also proposes new HVAC system compliant with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

KEY INFORMATION

- The Tour Bridge is a prominent feature of the BEP's Main Building 14th Street façade, it is also the primary entrance for tourist interested in participating in the Bureau's tour of the money producing facility.
- As part of its Centennial Celebration in 2014, the BEP established the need to renovate the existing Tour Bridge as part of its effort to create a destination worthy of being one of the most unique federal landmarks.

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- The BEP's Main Building was originally constructed in 1914 and is still utilized to house the Bureau's printing operations. The majority of the building is original and urgently requires maintenance and security upgrades.
 - The Tour Bridge was constructed as part of the original Main Building and consisted of an elevated open walkway with a protected roof cover, metal bollard railings at each side, fluted cast iron columns and metal truss superstructure, and it was used for employee access to the main building's rear door entrance.
 - In the early 1930's the Tour Bridge was renovated into a visitor's reception area to accommodate the large volume of tourists that visited every year. Un-insulated thin metal walls supporting glass windows were installed to completely enclose the bridge as well as the open area below the bridge that originally facilitated loading dock access into the Main Building. The renovation included an HVAC system, restrooms, drinking fountains and a guard station. Additionally, the roof and entryway were extended one bay east, by approximately 12 feet. Although interior finishes and exhibits have been changed and upgraded over the years, the bridge still remains as it has since this first renovation.
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RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Commends the applicant for working closely with NCPC, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, and the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office and taking into account the suggestion to restore the public plaza along 14th Street to its original curvilinear configuration, and to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on the existing historic fabric of the BEP Main Building and entrance bridge.

Approves the preliminary site and building plans for the Tour Bridge Modernization Project at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Main Building with the following changes:

- Remove the fence along the abandoned stairs to reduce its negative visual impact from the sidewalk.
- Modify the bridge glazing and mechanical system design to reduce the negative visual impact of the proposed mechanical soffit on the tour bridge façade.

Recommends that the Department of the Treasury consider the following items in the final design of the site and building plans:

- Remove three bollards located perpendicular to the sidewalk along 14th Street SW to protect the public space by keeping it open, and accessible.
- Explore integrating seating into the design of the curved entry walls without creating queuing and circulation conflicts, such as a custom concrete cantilever bench along the curvilinear wall in lieu of proposed benches.

Notes that any improvements located in public space will require a public space permit and coordination with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) Office of Public Space Management, and therefore recommends that the Department of the Treasury further coordinate with DDOT's Public Space Committee to ensure that the proposed streetscape elements are consistent with the standards of the associated area prior to the Commission taking final action on the project.

Requests the following information prior to final review:

- Temporary (during construction) and permanent ADA accessible entrance and exit ensuring that people with disabilities are able to arrive on the site, approach the building, enter and exit as freely as everyone else.
- Detailed drawings about the size, spacing, material and style of the proposed fence/bollard configuration along the street side and guardrail on top of the curved entry wall.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	1996 – Approval of curbside planter as part of a larger collection of buildings and site improvements called Southwest Gateway Project
	1999 – Approval of outdoor ticket booth
	2000 – Approval of Holocaust Museum Bollards
	2007 – Approval of Perimeter Security Lighting Main and Annex Buildings
	2009 – Commented favorably on Concept Design BEP (Main Building) Rehabilitation and Addition to Tour Entrance Bridge
Remaining actions (anticipated)	Spring 2015 – Approval of Final Site and Building Plans

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I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site

The Tour Bridge modernization project is located at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP, the Bureau) Main Building at 310 14th Street, in Southwest Washington. To the north of the project site is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; the Liberty Loan Building is located to the immediate south. West of the BEP Main Building across 15th Street, also known as Raoul Wallenberg Place, is the Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park. Directly To the east of 14th Street is the BEP Annex building, which occupies the entire block bounded by 13th, 14th, C, and D Streets.

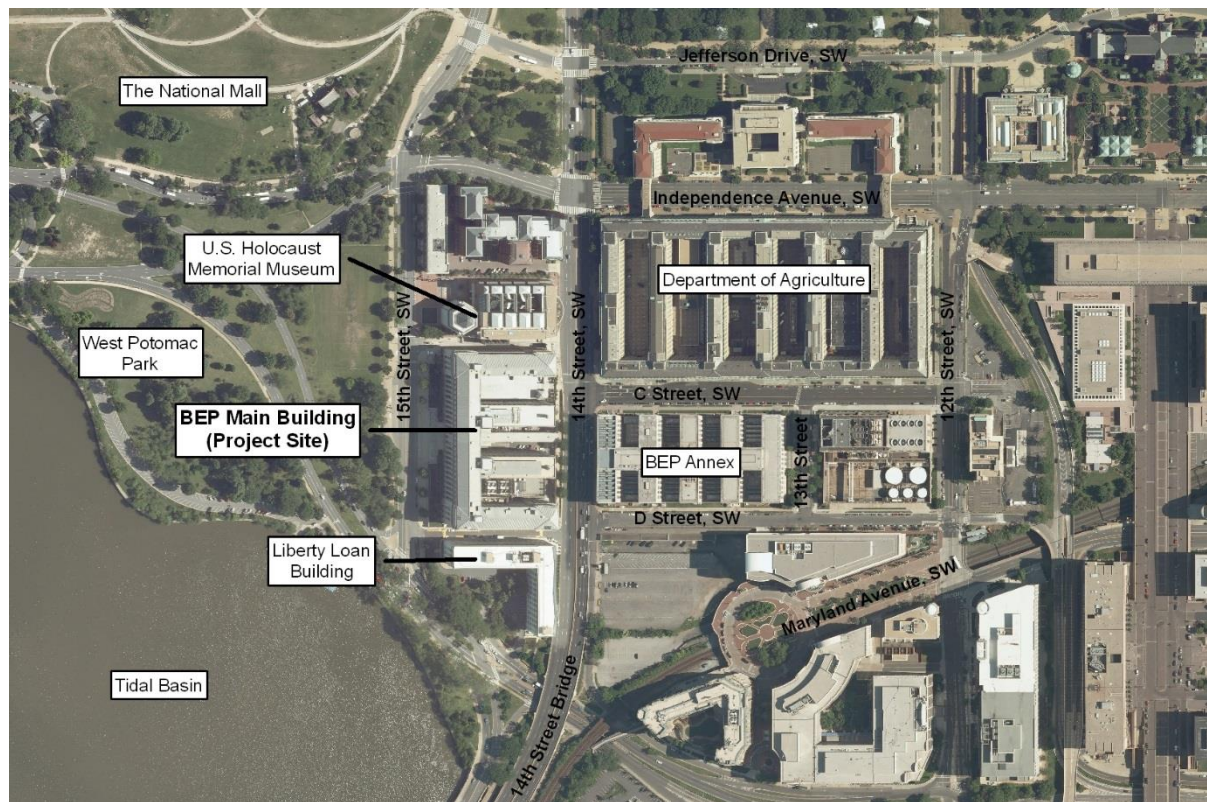


Figure 1: Map showing location of project site and surrounding context

Background

The BEP Main Building was constructed in 1914 in response to the Bureau having outgrown its existing facilities at the red brick Auditor's Building at the corner of 14th Street and Independence Avenue, and the federal government's expanding industrial printing needs. The building was designed with two distinctly different façade treatments corresponding to its surroundings and intended use. Along 15th Street, the building, with its classical design and monumental colonnade, reflects the prominence of its location adjacent to the National Mall. The building's east elevation, along 14th Street, reveals the industrial nature of the facility, although in a more simplistic

Federalist style with low ornamentation that would later influence the contextual core of the city. Four wings, housing printing machinery, extend toward 14th Street and are separated by three deep courtyards designed to bring natural light into the production areas. The south courtyard was eventually filled with utility buildings and equipment, while the north courtyard was later modified for an underground wastewater treatment facility and surface parking area.

Upon completion in 1914, the center courtyard was primarily occupied by an unenclosed, elevated, steel truss entrance bridge that spanned the center courtyard and connected 14th Street to the rear entrance of the Main Building. Though the bridge was originally intended to be used solely by employees, by 1916 it was also being heavily used by visitors to the Bureau due to the convenient location to transportation routes that permitted street level access to the bridge for vehicles and public streetcars along the 14th Street Southwest Gateway. As the number of visitors continued to grow through the years it was acknowledged that a more convenient visitor reception area was needed, and in 1929 the BEP initiated a three-year project to renovate the bridge in order to provide such an area. The project included the installation of un-insulated thin metal panel walls supporting industrial single-pane windows to provide additional protection from the elements above as well as the open area below which was used for loading dock access into the Main Building. Other improvements included a heating and cooling system, restrooms, drinking fountains, and a guard station. Although the interior finishes and



Figure 2: Historic image showing entrance bridge under construction



Figure 3: Historic image showing completed entrance bridge prior to being enclosed in 1929 (circa 1914)



Figure 4: Historic image showing four wings separated by three deep courtyards, (circa 1914)

exhibits have changed over the years, the bridge remains largely as it was following the first renovation in 1929.

In 1938, the Bureau began operations in a new annex building located on 14th Street between C and D Streets across from the main building to accommodate an increase in personnel and activities. In addition, a steam tunnel was built under 14th Street to connect with the main building, facilitate movement, storage and operational needs.

In the 1940s, a trolley turnaround was constructed underneath 14th Street in front of the BEP; new staircases were added to link the sidewalk on 14th Street to the new pick-up and drop off points below street level. As a result many of the Bureau's employees utilized the tunnel beneath the entrance bridge to enter the Main Building. This left the bridge to serve mainly visitors and tourists, and eventually became the primary entrance for the production tour established in 1965. Additionally, the roof and entry way were extended by one bay, approximately 12 feet, to the east, which eliminated a portion of the curved entry plaza from the original 1914 design.

Currently, the Bureau serves approximately 250,000 tourists annually who come to learn about the history and mission of the BEP, and witness the production of printed currency. Those wishing to view the exhibits and experience the production tour must first acquire a ticket from a booth located along 15th Street, near the service entrance drive at the northwest corner of the site. Each morning, particularly during the spring and summer months, tickets are distributed for a finite number of tours that will take place that day. Typically, tickets are fully distributed by mid-morning. Upon receiving a ticket, visitors make their way to the public



Figure 5: Historic image showing enclosed bridge renovation above and loading dock below (circa 1939)



Figure 6: Historic image showing 14th Street trolley turnaround (circa 1940)



Figure 7: Historic image showing enclosed bridge renovation and new staircases connecting the sidewalk with the trolley turnaround below street level (circa 1970)

tour entrance located on 14th Street. Queuing for the production tour takes place along the sidewalk and visitors are only admitted into the exhibit gallery – located along the entrance bridge – shortly before the tour begins. Currently, visitors who are unable to acquire a ticket for the production tour also are unable to experience the exhibits within the gallery and are turned away. During peak-season, the BEP welcomes approximately one hundred people through the tour bridge entrance every 20 minutes. The maximum tour bridge capacity is one hundred and fifty people, and it includes 50 people at the video area, 50 people in the middle of the bridge, and 50 people at the entrance.

In 2009, the Department of the Treasury submitted a proposal to NCPC for concept review for rehabilitation and an addition to the tour entrance bridge. At the time, the design concept included a new entry vestibule, and a small plaza expansion to the north of the entry vestibule at the entrance to the bridge, utilizing space above a set of abandoned stairs that lead down to the courtyards below to minimize queuing within public space. The existing wall along the back of the sidewalk was proposed to be realigned to the outside edge of the plaza, and contained lettering that served as a sign for the BEP Main Building. (Figure 12)

The 2009 design concept included the replacement of the metal panel walls and windows that enclosed the entrance bridge. The existing thin walls and single-paned windows were going to be replaced with new framed glass panels that ran the entire length of the bridge. The glass panels alternated between transparent and translucent in order to maximize the amount of natural light into the space and reveal the structural components of the historic bridge to the largest extent possible, while providing display space for exhibits and



Figure 8: Existing condition of entrance bridge (north elevation)



Figure 9: Existing condition of entrance bridge (south elevation)



Figure 10: Existing condition of entrance bridge showing people waiting to enter the tour and Jersey barrier along 14th Street

interactive displays. The roof over the bridge was going to be replaced with a standing seam roof over rigid insulation. The roof material recalled the metal roof of the building's penthouse monitors and existing guard booths. In addition to the improvements to the existing bridge structure, the 2009 concept design included a small addition along the southern side of the bridge near the Main Building. The addition incorporated a small theater intended to serve approximately 50 – 60 people, located adjacent to a live demonstration area. These elements have been changed in the current design.

During this 2009 review, and in studying some of the historic photographs provided by the Bureau, NCPC staff noted that the original public plaza at the bridge entrance had a curvilinear shape, and that the front entrance of the bridge aligned with the enclosing wall of the public plaza. It appeared that the rounded plaza was removed when the staircase leading down to the maintenance courtyard was constructed, and that the front façade of the entrance bridge had been extended forward slightly. In order to further preserve the historic integrity of the entrance bridge, staff recommended that the applicant explore the feasibility of returning the public plaza and front façade of the bridge to their original configuration.

At the December 2009 meeting, the Commission commented favorably on the overall concept design for the rehabilitation of, and addition to the Tour Bridge. Within its comments, the Commission also recommended that the applicant continue to work closely with NCPC, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, and the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office to identify whether the public plaza along 14th Street could be restored to its original curvilinear configuration, and to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on the existing historic fabric of the BEP Main Building and entrance bridge. The Commission further recommended that the applicant work with staff to identify

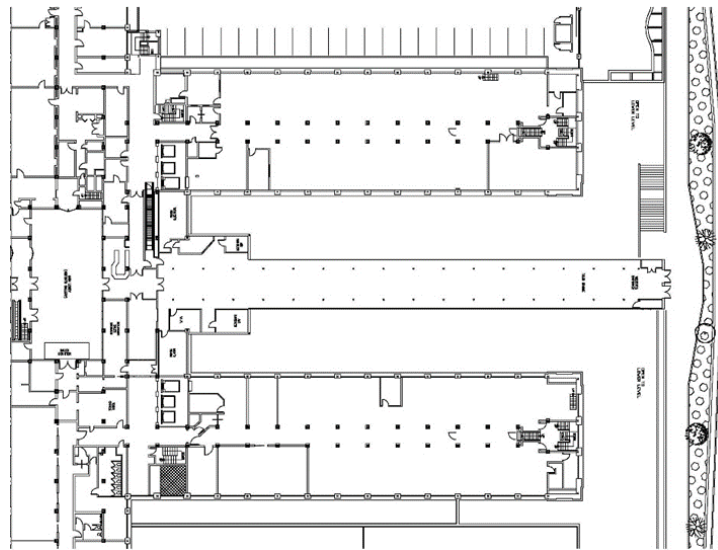


Figure 11: Existing site plan of entrance bridge and exhibit gallery along 14th Street

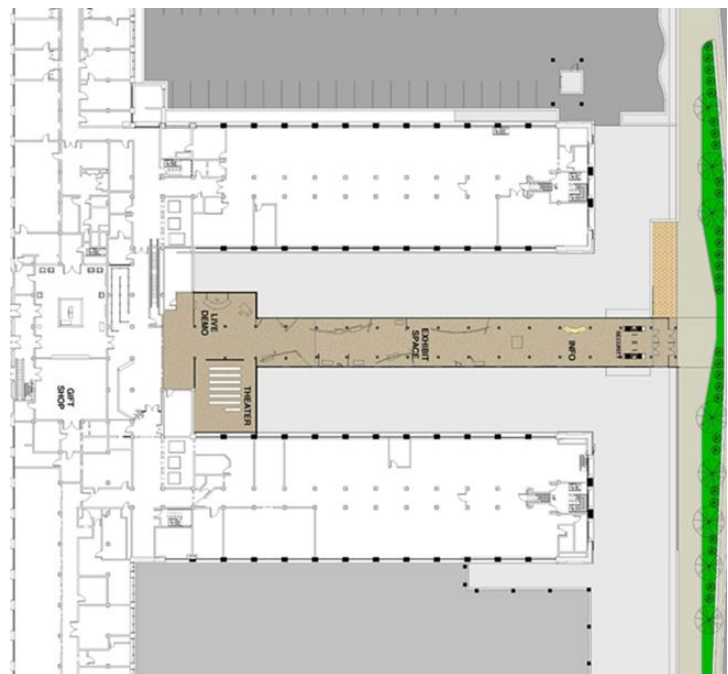


Figure 12: Proposed site plan of entrance bridge and exhibit gallery showing plaza and theater additions. (2009 concept design)

opportunities to improve pedestrian circulation and the overall streetscape along the 14th and 15th Street frontages of the BEP Main Building.



Figure 13: View of proposed entrance bridge improvements from the intersection of 14th Street and C Street, SW (2009 concept design)



Figure 14: View of proposed entrance bridge from the north along sidewalk showing extended public plaza and wall signage (2009 concept design)



Figure 15: View of proposed entrance bridge from the south along sidewalk showing theater addition (2009 concept design)

Proposal

The design for this project was first initiated in 2009, but in 2014 the BEP found as it prepared for its Centennial Celebration that there was a strong need to enhance its public tour experience and provide better security in part by rehabilitating the existing entrance bridge and visitor's exhibit gallery. Collectively, the project seeks to preserve the historic fabric of the entrance bridge by maintaining and highlighting its original steel structure; reduce energy consumption and maintenance; and provide a modern, convenient, year-round tour experience for visitors to the BEP.

The project will include new interior lobby, security processing and exterior public spaces that will minimize outdoor queuing and conflicts with general pedestrian traffic along the sidewalk. The project will also allow for non-ticketholders to take advantage of the educational public exhibits and historical film presentations in the visitor's gallery without participating in the production tour.

The applicant established a project budget of \$4.1 million, which does not include the exhibit redesign or the street improvements; therefore, the exterior plaza will be installed under a second phase of the project. Construction of the project is planned for 2016, during the visitor off-season period (October to March), and occupancy is expected prior to 2017. The project will comply with LEED standards, however it will not seek LEED certification. The project will also entail removal of PCBs, lead-based paint, and asbestos. The applicant states in its submission materials that the project has the following interior and exterior renovation goals:

Interior Renovation and Expansion Goals

- Refurbish exhibit spaces allowing upgraded flexible exhibits & special programs
- Enhance the quality of interior finishes and improve aesthetics
- Modernize and upgrade security review and procedures
- Improve visitor circulation through security, information desk, and the progression through exhibits and production tour queuing
- Provide an experience to accommodate production tour ticketholders and visiting tourists so that no one is turned away
- Provide separate staging area for VIP guests
- Improve merchandising operations and administrative support spaces

Exterior Renovation and Expansion Goals

- Improve queuing for the gallery tour and tourist entry
- Provide separation between tourists and general pedestrian traffic at sidewalk
- Provide opportunity for special events or exterior exhibit spaces
- Restore the original curvilinear entrance and other public space amenities and elements
- Create a visual "identity" at both the pedestrian and vehicular levels befitting the stature of BEP and the "Southern Sentry" of the city

The existing Tour Bridge will be renovated and modernized by removing and replacing the exterior enclosure, including the wall and roofing systems. Although the existing bridge structure will remain, the skin of the bridge will be replaced to enhance the aesthetics of the facility and to improve the thermal performance, maintenance and durability of the building. The existing thin, exterior wall panels and single pane windows will be replaced with a glazed curtain wall system that returns the original 1914 cast iron interior colonnade and truss structure to public view. The roof of the bridge will be removed and replaced with a metal, standing seam roof over rigid insulation to ensure a comfortable interior environment.

The modernization project will include two new replicated front entrance columns replacing the existing front bay bearing wall enclosure. The new columns will support the existing structural work and the roof overhang. The new design will give visitors visual access to the original Tour Bridge structure and provide a more open feel similar to the original 1914 open walkway.

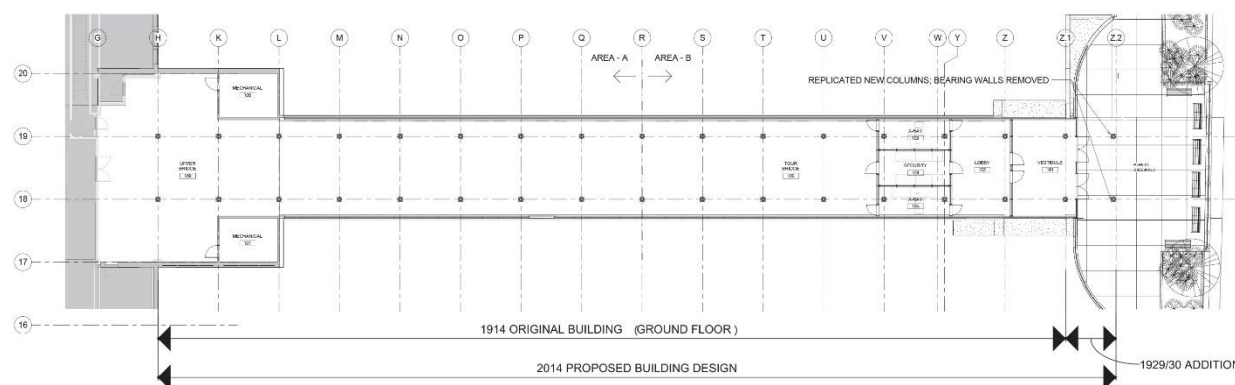


Figure 16: View of the 1914 original building, the 1929 addition and the scope of the proposed building design

The new full height continuous curtain wall system will be attached to the existing steel rafters with steel anchorage. The wall system will consist of steel windows and aluminum curtain wall that will have 1" insulated glass, and louvers at service areas. Similarly, the opaque glazed spandrel areas will consist of translucent glazing. The glazed area will be complemented with interior motorized shading devices for glare control.

Additionally, the design will restore the original curvilinear plaza to provide a gathering space at the front entry that allows visitors to safely rest and view the tour bridge activities away from the general pedestrian traffic along the 14th Street sidewalk. The use of continuous paving in the plaza and the continuation of the geometry of the curved entry walls through the paving plan adds interest to the surface treatment and further defines the plaza as a point of arrival. It also provides a better transition between the sidewalk and entry plaza. The existing trees along the sidewalk will remain, but the design will provide larger planting beds near the bridge entrance. The existing curb/gutter line at 14th Street will be undisturbed. The planted areas and sidewalk are approximately level but separated by a 6 inch curb. (Figure 18)

The proposed design will include a total of ten benches, providing a seating capacity of a seating capacity of about thirty people people. Eight benches will be six feet long, and the remaining two will be shorter in order to accommodate additional site furnishings such as trash cans. T applicant calculates that three visitors can be seated per bench

The proposal includes three options for street side bollard and fence line configuration to replace a portion of the "Jersey" wall in front of the Tour Bridge entrance and to serve as a guardrail on top of curvilinear wall (Figure 19):

- Option A consists of a 3 foot high fence with low bollard configuration, and a 4 foot high guardrail located on top of the curved wall.

- Option B consists of a 3 foot high loop fence with low bollard configuration, and a 4 foot guardrail located on top of the curved wall.
- Option C consists of a 3 foot high loop fence with tall bollard configuration, and a 4 foot guardrail on top of the curved wall.

The property line is located in the middle of the 14th street sidewalk, and the right of way is 110 feet.

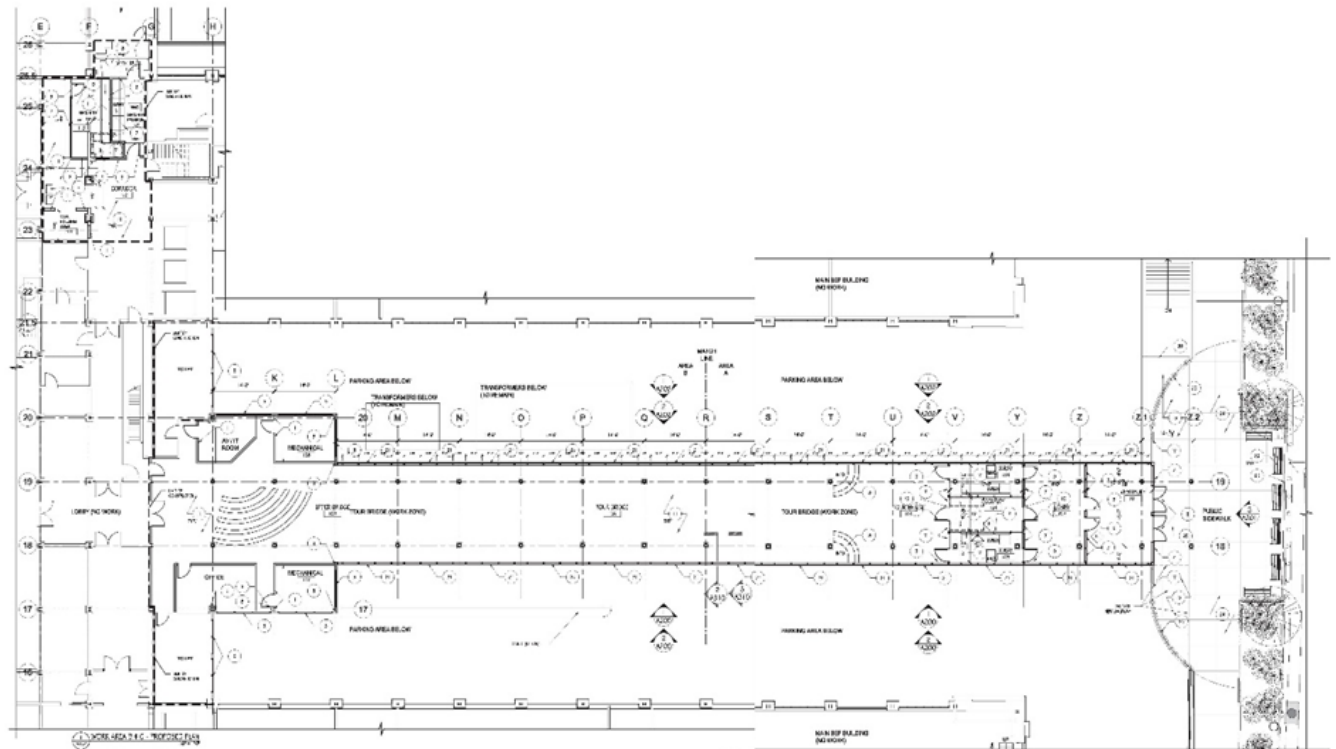
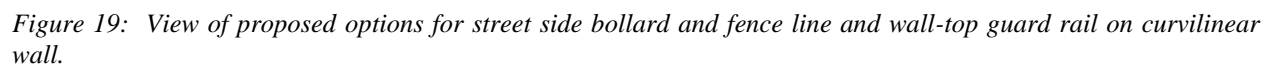


Figure 17: View of proposed plan showing new vestibule, lobby, security, information counters and VIP area



The project also provides more flexible and convenient circulation for visitors. After being cleared by security at the Tour Bridge entrance, ticketed visitors with appointed time slots will view a

short film and then proceed up the escalator to the elevated tour walkway (catwalk) overlooking the production areas. Upon conclusion of the tour an escalator will take visitors down to the existing visitor's gallery (at the Main Building Entrance) where they will have the opportunity to purchase souvenirs in the gift shop and view exhibits and displays. Visitors will also have an opportunity to meander back through the corridor and existing tour bridge area to view additional exhibits and displays at their leisure. Visitors who are unable to get tickets for the escorted tour will be allowed in the facility to view exhibit areas and purchase souvenirs in the gift shop. All visitors will be required to leave the complex by exiting through the Main Entrance portal along 15th Street. Tourists requiring assistance, i.e. wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, etc. may be permitted to leave from the tour bridge entrance.

The scope of the project does not include any streetscape improvements along 15th Street, only a portion of 14th Street directly across from the Tour Bridge entrance. In addition, the existing ticket booth (on 15th Street) will not be relocated at this time. The project does include a secondary VIP entrance with security processing which is connected to the parking lot on the north courtyard. (Figure 17)

During construction, the tour will be accessed at the Main Building's 15th Street entrance. At this time, BEP plans for disabled visitor access at the north courtyard parking deck, which is accessed from the 14th Street side of the building.

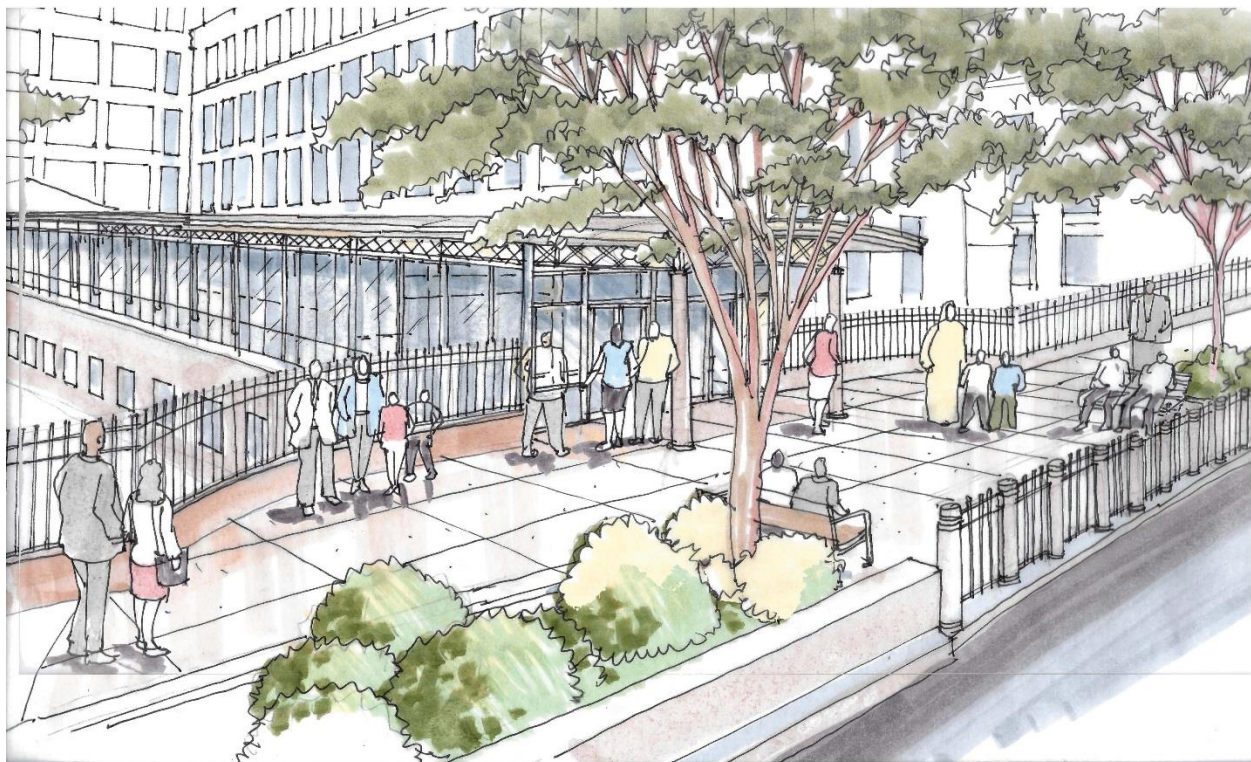


Figure 20: View of proposed entrance bridge improvements from 14th Street, SW



Figure 21: View of proposed entrance bridge along sidewalk showing replicated columns and roof overhang.



Figure 22: View of proposed entrance bridge from the south along sidewalk showing curvilinear plaza.

II. PROJECT ANALYSIS/CONFORMANCE

Executive Summary

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing's overall concept to modernize the existing entrance bridge and exhibit gallery, and to restore the curvilinear entry plaza is sympathetic to the historic fabric of the entrance bridge and the Main Building. Though the proposed design will continue to refine as it moves into the final stages, the end product will not only serve its intended purpose of highlighting the important history and mission of the Bureau, but it will also make the building itself a part of the visitor experience by highlighting its architectural design and maintaining its historic integrity.

Analysis

As the project moves forward, staff recommends that the Commission **approve the preliminary site and building plans for the Tour Bridge Modernization Project at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Main Building with the following changes:**

Sensitivity to existing historic fabric of the entrance bridge and BEP Main Building

While staff is encouraged by the efforts BEP is making to restore and showcase the historic fabric of the bridge and Main Building, much care will need to be taken as the details of the bridge progress further. Specifically, the proposed interior gallery includes an exposed mechanical system which conceals part of the historical truss structure from the outside and also affects the transparency of the proposed glazed curtain wall system on the facade. Due to the mechanical duct size, the curtain wall will require opaque spandrel panels to cover the mechanical system, hence affecting the visibility of the historic structure from the outside. **Therefore, staff recommends to modify the bridge glazing and mechanical system design to reduce the visual impact of the proposed mechanical soffit on the tour bridge façade.**



Figure 23: Existing condition of interior gallery showing the exposed mechanical system



Figure 24: Proposed rendering of interior gallery showing the mechanical soffit concealing the historic truss structure

The 2009 proposal included a small plaza expansion to the north of the entry vestibule by utilizing the space of abandoned stairs that lead down to the courtyards below. The stairs were added in the 1940's to connect the 14th street sidewalk level to the trolley turnaround on the lower level which is now used as employee parking. As recommended by the Commission in 2009, BEP took into account the suggestion to restore the public plaza to its original curvilinear configuration. The current proposal includes the demolition of a portion of the stairs landing to accommodate the curvilinear plaza, as well as a low exterior concrete wall to make the stairs not accessible. BEP has indicated that due to budget constraints, the stairs cannot be demolished. **Therefore, staff recommends to remove the fence along the abandoned stairs to reduce the negative visual impact from the sidewalk and create a visual identity at pedestrian and vehicular level.**



Figure 25: Existing condition of fence along abandoned stairs visible from the 14th Street sidewalk



Figure 26: Existing condition of former trolley turnaround currently used as employee parking

In addition, staff **recommends that the Department of the Treasury consider the following items in the final design of the site and building plans:**

Existing perimeter security elements along 14th Street

At its September 1996 meeting, the Commission approved File No. 5583, Bureau of Engraving and Printing Southwest Gateway Project. In addition to a new visitor center, which was never constructed, and building alterations, this project also included a number of site improvements. These improvements included the construction of a low seating wall and planter along the western curb of 14th Street for the purposes of separating pedestrians from traffic, providing building security, and reducing the number of bollards that would need to be installed. In addition, a short line of bollards running perpendicular to the sidewalk at either end of the planter was included in the approved site improvements. Staff's report also noted that a bollard design for the 14th Street side of the BEP Main Building was not submitted as part of the Southwest Gateway Project, rather the design would be coordinated with planned bollards at the Holocaust Museum.

Since the Commission's approval of the Southwest Gateway Project, the elevated curbside planter has been constructed along the 14th Street frontage of the BEP Main Building. Similarly, security bollards at both ends of the planter, and along the curb north of the planter, have been constructed. The design of these bollards is similar in appearance to what has been constructed at the Holocaust



Figure 27: Existing condition showing three redundant bollards perpendicular to the sidewalk along 14th Street

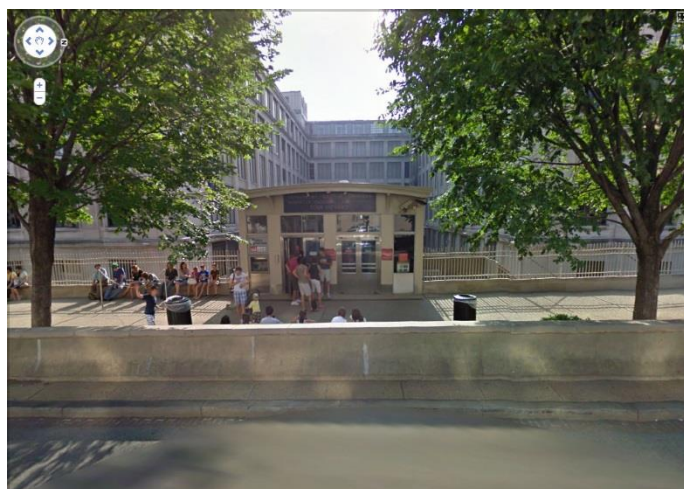


Figure 28: Existing condition showing people informally sitting on the low wall with guardrail on top

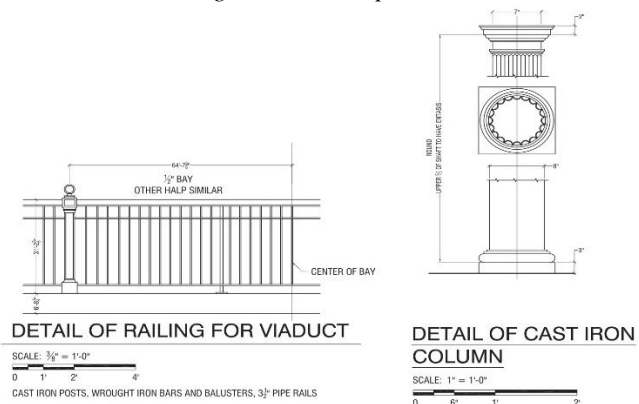


Figure 29: Historic drawings showing the bridge railing and column details

Museum – approved by the Commission at its February 3, 2000 meeting.

Given the narrowness of the sidewalks along 14th Street, most likely due to the width and number of vehicular travel lanes along this heavily traveled corridor, it is important that the streetscape remain as open and accessible as possible so as not to impede pedestrian movement and avoid redundant or unnecessary perimeter security elements. This will allow for the successful continuation of the increasing role this stretch of 14th Street has as a destination corridor in the National Capital. It will also serve to reduce visual clutter and assist the BEP in achieving its goal of improving the overall experience for its visitors. Therefore, **staff recommends to remove three bollards located perpendicular to the sidewalk along 14th Street SW to protect the public space by keeping it open, and accessible.** (Figure 27)

The location of the proposed site benches feels appropriate given the close proximity, strong visual connection to the Tour Bridge entrance and the natural way in which people use the space. The proposed design includes one type of bench for two distinct seating areas. While the proposed rectangular bench works well within the orthogonal seating area located in front of the Tour Bridge entrance parallel to 14th Street, which allows visitors to rest without interfering with the pedestrian circulation; the same bench type located against the curvilinear



Figure 30: Proposed site bench

wall adjacent to the Tour Bridge entrance and queuing area creates an inefficient layout and conflicts with the architecture, resulting in awkward leftover spaces. Additionally, while reviewing some recent photographs, staff noted that during peak season, people informally sit on the edge of the existing low wall with guardrail that is located in front of the queuing area along 14th Street while waiting to enter the tour. This fact reinforces the need to provide adequate seating in this area. Therefore, **staff recommends to explore integrating seating into the design of the curved entry walls without creating queuing and circulation conflicts, such as a custom concrete cantilever bench along the curvilinear wall in lieu of proposed benches.** (Figure 28)

The proposal includes the partial elimination of the “Jersey” wall in front of the tour bridge entrance and features a bollard and pedestrian fence safety railing given the proximity to the 14th Street ramp along this heavily traveled road. The applicant is still considering several options for both the street side bollard and fence line and the guardrail on top of the curved wall. The fence should resemble the simplicity of the original 1914 bridge railing and cast iron columns, while the bollards should be compatible with the context. Therefore, **staff requests additional information before final review regarding detailed drawings about the size, spacing, material and style of the proposed fence/bollard configuration along the street side and guardrail on top of the curved entry wall.** (Figure 19, 29)

Location of public tour ticket distribution and circulation

As noted above, during peak season tickets to the BEP production tour are distributed on a daily basis from a small ticket booth located along 15th Street. After receiving a ticket, visitors must then make their way through the pedestrian passage between 14th Street and 15th Streets south of the Main Building to the Tour Bridge Entrance along 14th Street in order to gain access to the visitor's gallery. Tickets are not required during non-peak season (September to February); space is given on a first-come, first-served



Figure 31: View of existing ticket distribution booth on 15th Street

basis with the line forming at the Visitor Entrance on 14th Street. In 2009, staff noted that in order to improve the overall efficiency of the ticketing and public tour process, it might be beneficial for the BEP to relocate ticket distribution to somewhere within the renovated visitor's gallery. In addition to making the process more convenient for visitors, this could have the added benefit of improving the streetscape along 15th Street by removing the existing ticket booth. Due to budget constraints, BEP has indicated that there will be no streetscape improvements along 15th Street. Additionally, the ticket booth along 15th Street will not be relocated. BEP has also indicated that due to security concerns, the ticket distribution should be located offsite and not within the tour bridge premises.

It appears that disabled visitors will not have similar access and exit points. In 1996, the "Southwest Gateway Project" included an additional stair-free entrance along 15th Street as part of the Visitor Center component, which was never constructed, providing visitors the option to enter either from 14th or 15th Street. Currently all visitors enter the tour bridge along 14th Street and are required to exit along 15th Street, except disabled visitors, which need to be escorted back to the tour bridge along 14th street to exit, since the 15th Street entrance is atop an existing monumental staircase and does not have any accessible ramps. During construction of the tour bridge, which will occur during the non-peak season, access to the tour will be rerouted to 15th Street. BEP has indicated that the parking deck entrance located in the north courtyard will serve as temporary ADA accessible entrance and exit. Therefore, staff **requests additional information before final review regarding temporary (during construction) and permanent ADA accessible entrance and exit ensuring that people with disabilities are able to arrive on the site, approach the building, and enter and exit as freely as everyone else.**

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital includes several policies that support the BEP's proposal to rehabilitate its tour entrance and enhance the overall quality of the visitor experience. Specifically, the Visitors Element contains policies that encourage the federal government to support publicly accessible visitor attractions on federal property such as exhibits and other educational activities and events that can inspire and educate visitors about the role of government. The Federal Workplace Element recommends that federal buildings remain open to the public by locating accessible activities "within federal workplaces on public streets and other pedestrian access levels, as well as within courtyards and on rooftops." In addition, by preserving and rehabilitating the original bridge structure of the Main Building, the project is also successful in carrying out policies contained in the Preservation and Historic Features Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan Objectives and Policies

The National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan Objectives and Policies includes several policies that support the BEP proposal to enhance the overall streetscape and operational security measures.

The Physical Perimeter Security includes policies which recommend that the location and arrangement of security barriers should be compatible with the placement of security barriers for other buildings on the street; therefore, the BEP tour bridge modernization project should coordinate with the streetscape elements along the Holocaust Museum and Liberty Loan Building.

In addition, Physical Perimeter Security encourages that the location of security barriers should minimize interruption of pedestrian circulation. Barriers should not unduly cross sidewalks perpendicularly causing pedestrians to maneuver between them. Perimeter Security barriers at intersections, corners and near cross walks or other highly used pedestrian areas should be minimize; barriers that are needed should be located to allow safe pedestrian waiting areas and pedestrian movement; consequently, as mention above, the bollards located on the northeast corner of the site perpendicular to the sidewalk along 14th street should be removed to ensure that the public space is physically accessible.

The Urban Landscape Contextual Design includes policies that encourage the protection of existing trees, including their canopies and root systems, and new street tree planting when the plantings will be in context with the existing or the planned streetscape of the corridor. This will minimize the visual impact and the physical intrusion of the security barriers in the urban landscape. In addition, perimeter security barriers in public space should incorporate decorative tree wells, planters, light poles, signage, benches, parking meters, trash receptacles and other elements and public amenities typically found in streetscape. Physical perimeter security should follow design principles to achieve a sense of openness, balance, rhythm, and hierarchy that will improve way finding and visual linkages along a street and enhance the pedestrian experience.

The BEP tour bridge modernization site plan protects existing trees, and provides large planting areas to minimize impervious surface, and improve street tree health. The proposal includes benches, lamps posts, a combination of bollards and pedestrian safety railing that replace the existing “Jersey” barrier and makes the entrance more visible and inviting.

Monumental Core Framework Plan

The project is located within the Southwest Rectangle precinct of the Monumental Core Framework Plan (the Framework Plan). Immediately south of the BEP Main Building, the Framework Plan recommends the redevelopment of the Liberty Loan Building as a nationally significant cultural destination with ground-floor amenities. In addition to its location across from the National Mall, and its views of the Tidal Basin, the Framework Plan considers the Liberty Loan site an ideal location for its ability to extend the sequence of important visitor attractions that exist along 14th Street south of the National Mall, of which the BEP tour is included. The project will undoubtedly improve the street presence of the BEP as well as the quality of the streetscape along 14th Street. This could have the added effect of increasing pedestrian flow towards the Liberty Loan site thereby helping to make it more attractive to future museum sponsors.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Both NCPC and the BEP have independent responsibility for this project under NEPA. In order for NCPC to approve this project, BEP is required to prepare environmental documentation in advance of the preliminary and final stages. Staff worked closely with BEP to determine what type of documentation is required.

Based on the recently updated Treasury Directive (TD) 75-02 “Department of Treasury’s National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) program,” this project meets definition of Categorical Exclusion D1. The project is considered “minor” in scale relative to the size of the BEP building and it will not result in a change in the functional use of the property. This categorical exclusion applies to repair and maintenance activities, including minor renovation and additions to buildings, roads, grounds, equipment, and other facilities that do not result in a change in the functional use of the real property.

As noted above, NCPC has an independent NEPA responsibility since this is a project located in the District of Columbia. NCPC staff has determined that approval of the project meets NCPC’s categorical exclusion §8(C)(21) of the Commission’s Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures. This categorical exclusion applies to the review and approval of acquisition of occupiable space by lease acquisition, construction, or expansion, or improvement of an existing facility when specific conditions are met. These conditions include the following: 1) the structure and proposed use are in compliance with local planning and zoning and any applicable District of Columbia, state, or federal requirements; 2) the proposed use will not substantially increase the number of motor vehicles at the facility; 3) the site and scale of construction are consistent with those of existing adjacent or nearby buildings; and 4) there is no evidence of community controversy or other environmental issues. Prior to applying this categorical exclusion, NCPC staff determined that no extraordinary circumstances were present as required by the Commission’s NEPA procedures.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The BEP Main Building is among the buildings on the original 1964 Joint Committee on Landmarks list. It is a significant example of a federal government facility designed in the aftermath of the 1901 McMillan Plan, and the establishment of the Commission of Fine Arts in 1910. The building's construction was authorized in 1911, and completed in 1914, in response to the federal government's expanding industrial printing needs. Designed by James Knox Taylor in the Classical Revival style, the building is a reflection of the prevailing Beaux-Arts tastes of the era. The west (15th Street) elevation, with its 360 linear foot colonnade, is the most formal realization of the McMillan Plan's intentions south of the Mall. By contrast, the east elevation on 14th Street reveals the industrial nature of the building, albeit in the context of the monumental core. The four wings housing printing machinery are separated by three deep courtyards, of which the center courtyard houses the entrance bridge, a contributing element of the historic building.

The proposed project is subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In 2009, BEP began consultation on the proposed alterations and additions to the tour bridge entrance with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO). An introductory meeting took place on September 2, 2009 and on October 2, 2009, staff visited the site to discuss the project further. At this early date, the DC SHPO staff indicated general support for the proposed concept design and has suggested as much transparency as possible for the bridge's replacement windows.

In 2014, the Department of the Treasury designated NCPC as lead agency pursuant to the Section 106 regulations (36 CFR 800.2a(2)). NCPC initiated consultation with DC SHPO on January 7, 2015. NCPC has determined that the Undertaking will have no adverse effects to historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5(b). The DC State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) concurred with NCPC's determination. In response to NCPC, the DC SHPO noted that the proposed glazing system would allow the majority of the tour bridge's structure to be visible once again as it was originally designed. They also noted that the proposed modifications to the entry plaza will restore, to some degree, the original curvilinear design.

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal at its January 14, 2015 meeting. The Committee forwarded the proposed preliminary site and building plans to the Commission with the statement that the proposal has been coordinated with all participating agencies. The participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the State Historic Preservation Office; the District Department of Transportation; the General Services Administration; the National Park Service; and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

At its meeting on November 19, 2009, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) expressed no objections to the concept design for rehabilitation of the 14th Street public tour entrance at the BEP Main Building. CFA suggested that additional study be given to restoring the entrance plaza

to its original curved configuration and that the detailing of the new entrance way be further refined.

As its meeting on January 22, 2015, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) expressed no objections to the preliminary design for the modernization of the 14th street public tour and visitor entrance and bridge structure. CFA is pleased with the Bureau's overall concept to rehabilitate the existing entrance bridge, exhibit gallery and restore the curvilinear entry plaza.

Coordination with local agencies

The applicant submitted a Preliminary Design Review Meeting Application (PDRM) on January 15, 2015 to the Public Space Committee Meeting / District Department of Transportation (DDOT). A public hearing has been scheduled for February 28, 2015.